

I just watched the hearing on new media ownership rules on C-SPAN and I was inspired to send a public comment for the first time ever. I've always been a music fan and interested in news, and have followed some of these issues in recent years as I've learned more about the media. I am already appalled at the lack of diverse formats on radio since the radio ownership rules were relaxed and a couple large corporations began buying up so many of the stations around the country. It is very worrisome to me to think this will happen with television and newspapers also. I believe the first amendment is the most important cornerstone of our democracy, and I can't imagine any FCC commissioner not sharing a similar view -- because you are entrusted with our airwaves where the majority of our free speech takes place. We do not want to move in the direction of the USSR, as one citizen noted, which had few broadcasters that were controlled by the government. Of course our corporations are not controlled by the government and never will be. But if we have just a few companies who own large percentages of the media, they themselves have great leverage with members of congress and cozy relationships with them. They don't want to jeopardize those relationships, so they do things like reject advertising from the Sierra Club that may ruffle the feathers of their friends in Congress or their other advertisers, as another citizen noted. Of course they have the right to reject such ads, and that's OK, AS LONG AS THE ADVERTISER HAS OTHER OUTLETS TO GO TO WITH THE SAME REACH AND IMPACT. BY RELAXING OWNERSHIP RULES, THERE WILL BE NO OTHER OUTLETS WITH THE SAME REACH AND IMPACT. Please do not do something now that will have to be undone decades later (read: Telephone Company monopoly) at a great cost to everyone. And in these economic times, do not do something that will have a terribly detrimental impact on so many media employees. There will be drastic consolidation and layoffs as large companies buy up small ones. That almost never benefits the public and almost always benefits the large corporations. Please don't let greed win over need.